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AN ATTRACTIVE STUDIO.

ROOMS OF GEORGE GIBSON.



HERE is always the expectation in one's mind in visiting a studio that something will be seen or

heard, or in some way learned, that is entirely new, that one never knew or heard before; and it is no uncommon experience to have this expectation fully and satisfactorily realized, for the average artist has the knack of arrangement, and usually the materials with which to arrange, and the forbidding possibilities of high-ceilinged studios, with glaring lights, fall into decorative accessories before the ready brain and good taste of its artist occupant.

To the decorative ability of Mr. Gibson has the tall, stately room, occupied by him, succumbed, and from the loneliness that was its prominent feature before its present occupancy it has developed into a gloriously-inviting apartment, where mementoes of foreign travels and curios, picked from historic spots personally or finding their way from some friend who himself gathered them in his wanderings abroad, are shown upon floor and walls, standing on antique rugs, or finding a safe place upon some unique bracket.

We have taken two corners from this studio bodily, and with their arrangement of oddities and their picturesque effects we have found a true picture of what such a place should be. Our first illustration, the one upon this page, shows the south side of the studio, looking toward the entrance, which is flanked by curtains and adorned above by a Zulu shield and assegais, with a background formed of a camel saddle covering. Near the entrance is a door leading into another, smaller room, shut off by a handsome portiere surrounded by palms and spears, surmounted by an effective arrangement of a Chinese lantern and a handful of Chinese spears. A bunch of picturesque pieces at the side of the main entrance, attracts attention. It consists of long-stemmed palms, the graceful Japanese spear with a peculiar-shaped guard covering the steel point, shaped somewhat like a cross of small size, a sabre of no mean proportions, and a few other warlike trophies, that indicate no sanguinary tendency on the part of the artist himself, beyond that natural "looting" disposition of all artists to secure what is pretty and novel for their "den." In the foreground before the entrance stands an easel bearing a sketch by Mr. Gibson of the Shire Mill Pond, in Surrey, a bit that has been put upon canvas and paper by artists innumerable and indefatigable, and from which Seymour Hayden made his well-known and beautiful etching. On the corner of the screen directly behind this picture hangs a large Bedouin hat and a variety of elaborately embroidered clothes from the peasants of Brittany, and a Rembrandt chair, or several of them, conspicuously obtrude their unique and quaint shapes among the furniture.

A hanging cabinet on the eastern wall holds a Limoges vase, presented to Mr. Gibson by the Messrs. Havilands, a specially made piece of no little beauty. A vase with brilliant peacock feathers occupies the upper shelf, and the various other ones are filled with diminutive Greek lamps, a large collection of Murano and Venetian glass picked up at Orvieto, a sea-horse from the shores of the Adriatic, and some beautifully delicate plaques. All this ornament and furnishing is in

harmonious and lively coloring, giving a cheerful glow to the corner and a warmth to the rooms. Portfolios of sketches finished and unfinished, palettes with clever little bits upon them, studies for projected paintings lie about the floor and tables in interesting confusion.

The initial letter at the head of our article gives a glimpse of the entrance and screen shown in the south view, but looking in the opposite direction, the umbrella-like Bedouin hat, the gold-laced and tinselled clothes, the Japanese screen, heavy portières, and beyond another Rembrandt chair, are all there as they are in nature.

George Gibson, who lives so pleasantly in his studio, has recently returned from a two years' visit to Paris, where he studied under Boulanger and others, enjoyed the life of the "Quartier," and had a taste of that real pleasure, that *dolce far niente*, even in the midst of hard work, incongruous as it may appear, that exists only among the attractions of Paris. From the capital Mr. Gibson of course made frequent excursions to the southern climates. He wandered through Switzerland and Italy, and brought back the multitudes of remembrances that now suitably fit in with the necessities of his studio.

Before going to Europe, Mr. Gibson exhibited at the principal exhibitions in this country, the Boston Art Club, Union League Club, and a long list of others equally prominent, while abroad one of his paintings hung in the last Salon. As an artist in color Mr. Gibson has talent, and his work in black and white is almost equally noticeable. Some excellent examples of this artist's work were shown in his drawings for the Shiloh article by Gen. Grant in a recent Century, in the *Art Journal*, his many pieces for Appleton & Co., his likenesses of members of the 7th Regiment, mostly done in water colors, and showing, among others, Messrs. Braisted, Smith and Van Winkle. Quite recently Mr. Gibson made drawings of the rooms in the 7th Regiment Armory, which were brought out in pamphlet form by THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER CO.

Last winter Mr. Gibson had classes in drawing and painting. This year he proposes to continue them, and will doubtless add largely to the con-

siderable number he had at the beginning of the past summer.

There is another and more interesting corner yet in this studio, and it is shown in our view of the west side, where the enormous Japanese umbrella (five feet in diameter) suspended from the ceiling in the center of the room; beneath it hangs another, shaped as a square. From this lower piece there is a star-shaped lamp of old Roman make, the wicks floating in the oil, and a drip basin under it. The lamp was picked up in a Roman shop, where it was the gem of the collection. An antique rug hangs against the wall, worn to a sheen by the feet of several generations of Arabs, and showing the irregularities of edge where the thoughtful camel, ever mindful of the interests of future dealers, had occasionally bitten out a morsel of the nutritious fringe increasing the value thereby to later American purchasers. This particular rug, however, was acquired through no such considerations as these. A still life leans in its frame against the rug, and a hammered Dutch metal plaque is over it, while above the pole against the wall is a pair of deer horns draped with a bright colored stuff, and accompanied by guns, spears and fishing rods.

Just to the left of this rug, and caught up behind the stock of an Oriental gun, is the hat worn by Gen. Santa Anna, and left by him on the field in the hurry of his historical flight. In the corner, on a bracket, is a rich red vase, an example of French coloring, with a scarf of brilliant yellow Japanese silk thrown about it. The diamond-shaped tile on the wall was taken from Ischia immediately after the great earthquake, by Mr. Gibson, upon the



GEORGE GIBSON'S STUDIO (SOUTH SIDE), SHOWING ENTRANCE.

occasion of a personal visit to that place. There are a number of plain copper-wire bracelets which were taken from the ankle of a Zulu warrior, a pipe from the head of the Amazon, and a quantity of some more Murano glass. An old German chair, a water jug of some peculiar Indian ware, old flint locks, swords, cutlasses and palms, rare books, bows and arrows, and a vast number of sketches. There is a street scene in Shire, a glimpse at a Brittany church, a charming view of the Chateau of Hainault, some Breton women gathered about their market square and in all the picturesqueness of their native costumes, a water color of the river at Pont Aven, a street scene in the same town, and a quantity of Italian pieces, with an admixture of farms and roads on Long Island.

LEATHER ORNAMENTAL ART.—Beautiful effects are producible by this art. The leaf or petal having been first outlined, is cut with scissors or penknife. The leather is then soaked in warm water, rolled and pressed. Mid-rib, smaller ribs, reticulations, &c., are made with small ivory modeling tools. The undulating direction is given by the various lobes of the fingers, or tools that will produce the same effect, when wet. Tendrils and stalks are made by twisting and pinching narrow strips of the leather while wet; and in some cases the leather is rolled round thin brass or copper wire. The parts are attached to each other or to the ground by glue and small pins, after being painted over with a thin solution of parchment size. The ground, whether wood or leather, should also be varnished. The whole work is to be finally coated with cap varnish, copal or mastic.



GEORGE GIBSON'S STUDIO (WEST SIDE).

HE WAS INSULTED.

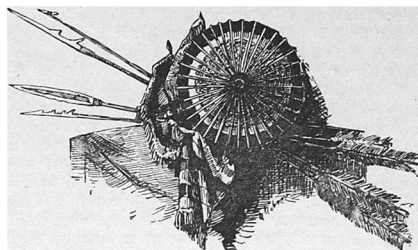
THE other evening when a lecturer was giving a discourse on art, and pointing out the needs of this country in the matter of understanding and taste, a man arose from the audience and, with the audible remark, "I'm an American, and I won't stay here to be insulted," strode out at the door. He illustrated a certain element in the community—an element possessed by every nation, but unhappily prominent in our own and more readily observable by foreigners, perhaps, than by ourselves. This element confuses self-sufficiency with patriotism, and declares that whatever is American is better than any prototype or analogue that ever existed before, or in any other place. It does not take into consideration the fact that certain things that other nations are famous for have barely engaged the attention of this country. It is not reasonable to suppose that a nation so young as ours, and with so much work on its hands of a political and industrial character, should advance at a single stride to the position occupied by older peoples. That we are advancing more rapidly than nation ever advanced before, is true. No country ever did, in the space of an hundred years, what we in our first century

have done. But to say that we have reached the pinnacle of 'all achievement, is to pronounce upon us the doom that further progress is impossible.

It is in our art that the self-sufficient element makes itself particularly objectionable. We have artists that in technique and inventiveness may be compared with the best living painters abroad, but there are not as many of them. We have manufacturers of textile fabrics, ornate furniture, wall papers, tile and carpets, whose productions hold their own with those of any other people, but their factories and studios are not to be found in every city, nor even in every State. Our sculptors may be reckoned on our ten fingers. Our really able decorators could be enumerated in the space of less than a column. A census of the best potters, carvers, makers of ornamental work in metal, designers for jewelry and clocks, and artistic binders of books, would take but a short time to complete. In the manufacture of rugs, laces, and many of those dainty little things that we call bibelots and bric-a-brac, we are barely represented, and in their finer branches, not at all. These things are said not because the influence of foreign customs and fashions has made itself felt in our society—more often for harm than good—or because of a desire to offset the blatant self-praise of certain of

will; and let the too sensitive patriots who cannot bear a piece of kindly advice content themselves with the belief that, if the day of those works is not yet, it soon will be.

A BEAUTIFUL surface can be given to the plaster of Paris casts employed for artistic purposes by applying with a soft brush and silk handkerchief a thin varnish of a preparation composed of half an ounce both of white soap and white wax boiled with two pints of water.



our fellow countrymen, but because they are facts, and because the sooner we wisely and modestly recognize our shortcomings the sooner will their remedy be sought. We regret that so many of our ambitious young artists should choose to paint foreign pictures entirely, depriving us of their power to represent our landscape and people, record our history and give token of our thought and fancy, but it would be folly to deny them access to foreign schools and foreign galleries, for, taken as a whole, they are better than ours. We may blame those who gain their living by the application of art to things of common life, that their designs are conventional and are, in great measure, copies of European designs, but to say that they should not draw upon these older models is to say that crude invention would be tolerated by those for whose benefit they labor, until the art-progress of the nation should have developed the ability to fairly compete with Europe. It will probably be some years before we have Sèvres china, Doulton pottery, Persian rugs, Japanese bronze, Morris textiles, and Italian mosaics—that is, their counterparts,—issuing in any large quantities from our own workshops. These things will come in time, and they will also, let us believe, bear the stamp of a nationality that is often lacking in our present work.

Art is cosmopolitan. Ideas of truth and beauty do not depend for their value on their source. All men accept them at their intrinsic worth, if they be men of mind. The old world has been a teacher to the new. Her lessons have been well conned by the young student, and it is hardly becoming to spurn the venerable tutor after she has given to us freely of her thought, her industry and her art. Brag will not enable us to prove her better, but works